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NOVEMBER, 1948

The Liberalist

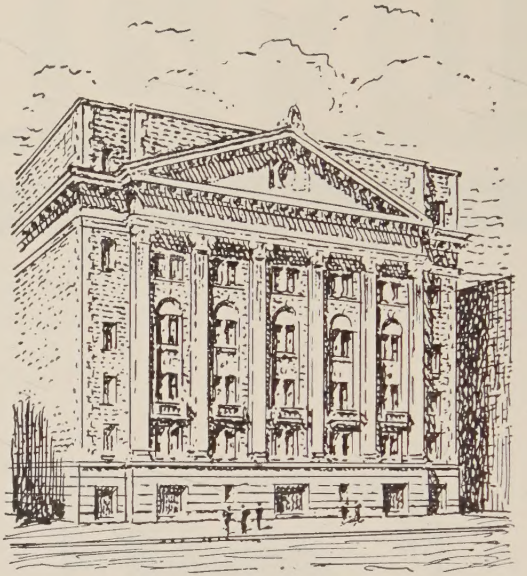
PUBLISHED BY THE PEOPLES CHURCH OF CHICAGO

From

"We Thank Thee"

by Thomas Curtis Clark

We thank Thee, Lord, on this recurring day,
For liberty to worship as we will;
We thank Thee for the hero souls of old
Who dared wild seas their mission to fulfill.
O, gird our hearts with stalwart faith in good,
Give us new trust in Thy providing hand,
And may a spirit born of brotherhood
Inspire our hearts and bless our native land.



THE PEOPLES CHURCH OF CHICAGO

Lawrence Ave. at Sheridan Road

This Church was founded July 7, 1912, as a liberal independent church. It united with the American Unitarian Association, Western Unitarian Conference and National Federation of Religious Liberals in 1923. Property purchased for new building 1924. Ground broken June 14, 1925. Corner stone laid November 15, 1925. Church dedicated October 10, 1926. Preston Bradley has been the Pastor from the beginning of the Church.

Declaration of Principles

"The purpose of the church is to deal in plain terms with the supreme things in human life as measured by the rational conclusions of science and history. It seeks to promote a conception of nature, history and the meaning of life in accordance with the facts of experience and with the progress of growing knowledge. It is essentially religious, not in the traditional but in the scientific and ethical sense of the word. It regards religion as spiritual energy directing itself toward the enrichment of the individual life and the perfection of the social order. This church assumes the right of every one to think his or her own thoughts, and expects the greatest progress to follow from entire intellectual liberty and perfect freedom of judgment. It welcomes to its membership all who wish to co-operate in making a world which shall be enlightened by knowledge, guided by reason and animated by good-will."

The Liberalist
PRESTON BRADLEY, Editor
GRACE THAYER BRADLEY, Associate Editor

Volume XXV **November, 1948** *Number 8*

"MAN AGAINST DARKNESS"

SERMON BY DR. BRADLEY,
Pastor of The Peoples Church of Chicago,
September 26, 1948

(Dr. Bradley, in two sermons on the subject "Man Against Darkness" gave an answer to an article written by Dr. W. T. Stace for "The Atlantic Monthly" magazine of September, 1948. The first sermon follows and the second will be printed in the December "Liberalist".)

WHEN the September number of "The Atlantic" magazine came to my study desk, I was immediately attracted to an article in that number entitled "Man Against Darkness." The author was Doctor W. T. Stace, the distinguished professor of philosophy at Princeton University. I consider "The Atlantic Monthly" one of the finest magazines published in the United States, and for many, many, many years, even going back to my High school days, I don't think I have ever missed a copy of it in any month. I read the article through once in the ordinary process of reading a magazine through from cover to cover. I started it in a rather casual way, just as you would automatically read articles one after another in a magazine of your choice. I read it through once and then put it aside for two or three days: it was a challenge to me, it was disturbing, and then I read it again, and the second reading only intensified my first impression and the first result of the article upon me. I was building the Sunday morning sermons for these fall Sundays and I thought, "I wonder if I could use that article as the basis of the Sunday morning broadcast?" I knew that it would not have a great popular appeal in view of the contemporary events taking place in the modern world. I knew it would have a limited appeal, that it would appeal to those classified as the literati interested in the problems of life, not usually swayed by headlines and the raucous voices; it may appeal to a few of the more studious-minded or serious-minded students of our high schools or universities, but it will have no general appeal. And yet I thought, "Here in essence is the thought of a great mind," for Doctor Stace has a great mind. He was born in London, took his Doctor's degree in Literature and Philosophy at the Dublin University in Ireland, and since, I think, 1922 or 1923, has been a member of the staff of Philosophy of that great University at Princeton. There may be students, or former students of Doctor Stace listening to me,

or in this congregation this morning, who will recognize the integrity and sincerity of his thinking. He is having a tremendous influence in the philosophical world.

Because there is the difficulty involved that perhaps few people will have read Dr. Stace's article, and the majority will therefore have no idea of what I am trying to rebut or refute, I am going to do something which I have rarely done—perhaps not more than once or twice in all the years of my ministry here. I am not going to read the entire article I assure you, but I am going to read two or three paragraphs because I want those of you who have not read it, and members of our radio congregation who have not read it, to know what his thesis is as he states it in his own words, and then I shall attempt, as best I can to answer one or two intimations which he gives us in this article.

My reactions were rather frightening to me, because I feel that if his conclusions are true, then we are facing inevitable disaster, and it has been a part of my own philosophical attitude toward the problems of religion and civilization that while that disaster is possible, it is also preventable, and recognizing the possibility of its being prevented gives us a certain fundamental hope that we will develop sufficient potentiality to prevent disaster. If an individual has a sense that what he does will ultimately lead to disaster and he has within himself the power of making a decision for the prevention of that disaster, that's one thing, but if the individual faces disaster and the individual can do nothing about it, just being a helpless victim of an impending disaster, then, of course, you have an unutterable and inexpressible tragedy. I can think of no greater tragedy than that.

Now, I want to read to you a few sentences or paragraphs:

"The Catholic bishops of America recently issued a statement in which they said that the chaotic and bewildered state of the modern world is due to man's loss of faith, his abandonment of God and religion."

In the next sentence in reply, he says:

"For my part I believe in no religion at all. Yet I entirely agree with the bishops. It is no doubt an oversimplification to speak of *the* cause of so complex a state of affairs as the tortured condition of the world today. Its causes are doubtless multitudinous. Yet allowing for some element of oversimplification, I say that the bishop's assertion is substantially true."

That immediately suggests a paradox on the part of Doctor Stace, which we will see about later. Then he goes on and says:

"For it came about in this way that for the past three hundred years there has been growing up in men's minds, dominated as they are by science, a new imaginative picture of the world. The world, according to this new picture, is purposeless, senseless, meaningless. Nature is nothing but matter in motion. The motions of matter are governed, not by any purpose, but by blind forces and laws."

Here he quotes Professor Whitehead, who was Professor of Philosophy in Edinburgh, Scotland, then at Harvard. He wrote "Adventures in Ideas." Professor Whitehead is the philosopher who was a mathematician as well as a philosopher. His field was Mathematics and I think in Chemistry as well, but Professor Whitehead said: "Religion, or God, is a sense of the eternally concrete." It is rather interesting, but that is another sermon.

" 'Nature on this view,' says Whitehead . ." 'is merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly.' You

can draw a sharp line across the history of Europe dividing it into two epochs of very unequal length. The line passes through the lifetime of Galileo. European man before Galileo—whether ancient pagan or more recent Christian—thought of the world as controlled by plan and purpose. After Galileo European man thinks of it as utterly purposeless. This is the great revolution of which I spoke.

"It is this which has killed religion. Religion could survive the discoveries that the sun, not the earth, is the center; that men are descended from simian ancestors; that the earth is hundreds of millions of years old. These discoveries may render out of date some of the details of older theological dogmas, may force their restatement in new intellectual frameworks. But they do not touch the essence of the religious vision itself, which is the faith that there is plan and purpose in the world, that the world is a moral order, that in the end all things are for the best. This faith may express itself through many different intellectual dogmas, those of Christianity, of Hinduism, of Islam. All and any of these intellectual dogmas may be destroyed without destroying the essential religious spirit. But that spirit cannot survive destruction of belief in a plan and purpose of the world, for that is the very heart of it. Religion can get on with any sort of astronomy, geology, biology, physics. But it cannot get on with a purposeless and meaningless universe.

"If the scheme of things is purposeless and meaningless, then the life of man is purposeless and meaningless, too. Everything is futile, all effort is in the end worthless. A man may, of course, still pursue disconnected ends, money, fame, art, science, and may gain pleasure from them. But his life is hollow at the center. Hence the dissatisfied, disillusioned, restless spirit of modern man.

"The picture of a meaningless world, and a meaningless human life, is, I think, the basic theme of much modern art and literature. Certainly it is the basic theme of modern philosophy. According to the most characteristic philosophies of the modern period from Hume in the eighteenth century to the so-called positivists of today, the world is just what it is, and that is the end of all inquiry. There is no reason for its being what it is. Everything might just as well have been quite different, and there would have been no reason for that either. When you have stated what things are, what things the world contains, there is nothing more which could be said, even by an omniscient being. To ask any question about *why* things are thus, or what purpose their being so serves, is to ask a senseless question, because they serve no purpose at all. For instance, there is for modern philosophy no such thing as the ancient problem of evil.

"At the bottom these idealistic systems of thought were rationalizations of man's wishful thinking. They were born of the refusal of men to admit the cosmic darkness. They were comforting illusions within the warm glow of which the more tender-minded intellectuals sought to shelter themselves from the icy winds of the universe. They lasted a little while. But they are shattered now, and we return once more to the vision of a purposeless world.

"Another remedy commonly proposed is that we should turn to science itself, or the scientific spirit, for our salvation. Mr. Russell and Professor Dewey both make this proposal, though in somewhat different ways. Professor Dewey seems to believe that discoveries in sociology, the application of scientific method to social and political problems, will rescue us. This

seems to me to be utterly naive. It is not likely that science, which is basically the cause of our spiritual troubles, is likely also to produce the cure for them. Also it lies in the nature of science that, though it can teach us the best means for achieving our ends, it can never tell us what ends to pursue. It cannot give us any ideals. And our trouble is about ideals and ends, not about the means for reaching them."

Now, we are going to treat this matter not only today, but also next Sunday, because I consider it so important and vital and valuable for us in this transitory period of change in religious thinking, therefore, I would not want the most intellectually discriminating listener to think that in what I say today I have built my complete and final rebuttal to Doctor Stace's position in this matter of "Man Against Darkness."

Doctor Stace recognizes what I think every observer cannot help but recognize, that there have been fine personalities, great intellects, unimpeachable characters, great scholars, great humanitarians, great people who manifest all these qualities of greatness, strength and beauty of life, entirely devoid of the religious imperative. I have known many good and great people who never entered a church door, who, if you were to talk with them personally and privately you would discover, have no sense of dependability outside the area of their own consciousness; they are wholly within themselves complete. There have been many such. I could name them, so could you who are familiar with these matters. Many such personalities in the field of philosophy and life: David Hume, Huxley, Charles Darwin, John Stuart Mill, unimpeachably good men who lived and thought and died without any sense of dependability upon anything in the cosmos outside of their own personality. And Doctor Stace himself is that kind of man who does not accept with any degree of loyalty any religious philosophy whatever, as we think of it. He is not a Catholic, nor a Protestant, nor Jewish in his theories; he is possibly —I don't know whether he would relish this designation at all, but I don't think he could even be called an agnostic—I think, with more philosophical accuracy and more obedience to the niceties of semantics, and using the word which is an absolute denial that there is any such force as God, or that there is any truth in religion whatever, he could be placed in the philosophical field of atheism, which is indeed rare, most rare.

I should like those of you who are interested not to miss next Sunday. I would appreciate your having your young people attend with you, especially students in our universities and colleges, for it is in a field in which young people are having great concern, and they are giving great examination to these truths.

Doctor Stace speaks of the great illusion. He has a great deal to say about our illusions. He recognizes the validity of our illusions and, of course, it is fundamentally true that most of us are dominated by our illusions. How many times have we thought that some event or some experience which was part of our lives was based in reality only to discover that we were following an illusion; that it had no basis of reality at all, that it was fundamentally nonexistent as far as reality was concerned? Doctor Stace thinks of religion and man's dependability upon a cosmic power as the great illusion of history, and in this great illusion he admits, like other illusions, that under the imperative of the illusion itself man has been able to do many things of moral and spiritual and aesthetic

achievement in something which is called "civilization," but he also indicates, that because it is an illusion, no matter what might have been accomplished as being good and beautiful and true, that if that is all there is to it, then civilization is doomed to fail finally. Therefore, it is rather a hopeless fact that Doctor Stace presents to us. The only hope which he feels is that man must become primarily interested in only one question: What is true? And then, in the discovery of what is true, being courageous enough to live with it. He says the challenge of civilization is our willingness to live with truth. I don't see anything wrong with that. I accept that. I believe it. Doctor Stace has a much more civilized mind than I have and one that is entirely conditioned by long, long processes of intellectual discipline; he is accustomed to the challenge of logistics; he does not speak with any emotional emanation whatever. But the difficulty that I have with Doctor Stace, and it runs through this whole article, is when he recognizes what the bishops of the churches of America and the religionists and theologians have been saying for the press, that it is man's loss of faith in God; and loss of faith in moral processes for his own universe and that man has lost faith in his own moral imperatives; then Doctor Stace's idea is that to bolster them with a great illusion of God makes religion an opiate. In this particular he shares with laymen the whole philosophy of consciousness in the self sufficiency of man; but man without the motivation of a higher moral stability soon wrecks himself with his science and his materialism.

Now, Doctor Stace introduces this, which is to me a hopeless and impossible alternative: he will admit of no fact in the cosmos that can possibly be conceived of as a God, nor a universe with any purpose. He believes that we are all wound up to run down, and that is all there is to it. He believes that we are all accidents of the cosmos, that none of us was wanted, that we all came into the world and leave it, as an insignificant microscopical part of something called "human dust," and that there is no meaning to that universe, no meaning to you or to me; but he recognizes the presence of moral values; and I should like to ask him on any materialistic, mechanistic philosophy to explain to me the moral sensitiveness and value without the imperative of a higher consciousness than man himself possesses.

I cannot accept it. Perhaps I have a blind spot and cannot see it. There are lots of people who think that I have. I would not object if they thought I had but *one,* but they think I have hundreds. Perhaps I am so much a victim of inheritance, predisposition and a million other factors always decisive in the relation of personality . . . perhaps I have all these things and have this blind spot and I cannot see it, but when a man says that man must learn to live without a great illusion and universal purpose, if that's all there is to this whole business, if we are just a lot of machines, if we are just numbers, numbers in the factories of restless, meaningless nothingness, if that's all there is to it, if you and I when we die, die like those autumn leaves that are falling from the trees this day, if there is no such thing as the soul of man and the life of God, what a pity that this whole business ever started in the first place! What a tragedy you were ever born! What a tragedy I was ever born! I am just a helpless victim of a mechanistic world, wound up by what, or who, we do not know and we cannot understand; and the tears and the hopes, and the dreams and the successes and

triumphs and happiness and love and radiance in the faces of little children, and the birds, and the moonlight and the dawn, are just a mess of meaningless accidents of a world without purpose.

"Doctor Stace, you can believe that with all your philosophy and mind, heart and sincerity,"—for I do not impugn his sincerity; he is honest in his convictions;—"You may believe that, if you choose, I do not." I revolt against it with all the experience of my life. I revolt against it with every sorrow, every joy. I am not in a cosmic madhouse where things run without direction or control. That, I do not believe. I wish you would not believe it, young man, young woman. There is something about the belief in a universal purpose that gives strength and validity to life; it brings happiness.

Until an artist can stand before a canvas with his palette and squeeze from the tubes an infinite variety of colors, all the colors of the spectrum, and then take his hand, after squeezing the paint upon the palette and go over to the canvas and just scoop up a whole handful of that paint and throw it at that canvas and have it result in a beautiful Sistine Madonna, or The Angelus . . . . until that happens, or until the typesetter can pick up his type from his case and scoop up a handful of it and throw it into the composing room and have come out of it a sonnet by Wordsworth, or a play by Shakespeare, or an essay by Emerson, until that can happen I shall not abandon my faith nor my belief that this is a world of purpose; and it is the business of man to find out the purpose of God and build the Kingdom.

THE PEOPLES CHURCH OF CHICAGO

THE CHURCH is located at 941 Lawrence Avenue, just east of Sheridan Road.

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES are at 11 o'clock.

* * *

SUNDAY EVENING SERVICES begin on Sunday, November 7th, at 7:30 o'clock, and last until 8:45. The church is always filled to capacity on these great Sunday evenings, and those who come early may enjoy an organ concert by Mr. Walter Flandorf, the church organist and director of the Peoples Church Choir.

* * *

THE MUSIC of the church has been augmented this season by the Peoples Church Quartet, consisting of Dorothy Staiger, soprano, Marcia Sandahl, alto, Alfred Wiser, tenor, and Arwin Schweig, bass. The quartet and the choir are under the able direction of Walter Flandorf, organist and director.

* * *

DR. BRADLEY will open his GREAT BOOK LECTURE SERIES on Wednesday evening, November 3rd, at 8 o'clock sharp in the auditorium of The Peoples Church for the sixteenth season. These lectures are Chicago's oldest, continuous and most largely attended book lectures.

There is no admission whatever, and the people of every faith and creed are invited. Last year the lectures attracted an average audience of 1,200. The lectures last but one hour.

Dr. Bradley has selected the following list for the month of November:

Nov. 3—"Thy Men Shall Fall," by

Sidney and Samuel Moss.

Nov. 10—"Of Flight and Life," by Charles Lindbergh.

Nov. 17—"Remembrance Rock," by Carl Sandburg.

Nov. 24—"Remembrance Rock," by Carl Sandburg.

As will be noted, Dr. Bradley plans to devote two lectures to Carl Sandburg's "Remembrance Rock."

Wednesday evenings in November will be memorable evenings for those attending these outstanding book lectures by Dr. Bradley.

* * *

CHURCH SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION meets every Sunday morning at 9:30. Mr. Robert Crosswhite is Superintendent. Our church school is growing in stature in every way. Parents are welcome to visit the school and encourage its work.

PARENTS who wish to attend Sunday Morning Service may leave small children with our Attendant in Anderson Hall during the service.

DR. BRADLEY'S RADIO SCHEDULE

Dr. Bradley IS ON THE AIR every weeknight, Monday through Friday at 6 o'clock over WGN.

These broadcasts are of a philosophical nature, designed to be of help to people in all walks of life, and Dr. Bradley in these friendly, intimate chats over the airwaves, deals not only with local, civic, national and international problems, but with the more intimate problems of personal living as well.

This radio audience is a vast metropolitan group not only from the middle west, but mail is received from every part of the country, as well as from Canada, telling of interest in the broadcast and of help and inspiration received.

Wednesday evening is Book Review night on the air, and many a book store, library or publisher has experienced a sudden raid on its bookshelves because of Dr. Bradley's book review broadcast over WGN on a Wednesday evening at 6 o'clock.

* * *

The SUNDAY BROADCAST over WJJD from 11 o'clock Sunday morning until 12:30 from the pulpit of the Peoples Church is the oldest religious broadcast now on the air in the United States. It has the largest Hooper rating (size of listening audience) of any church broadcast emanating from Chicago. Letters are received every week at the church office from far and wide and every Sunday a great many out-of-town listeners passing through Chicago, greet Dr. Bradley after the service.

Church members can do a friendly service by calling the attention of their friends to these weeknight and Sunday broadcasts.

THE PEOPLES CHURCH CHOIR

The Peoples Church Choir meets every Friday night for rehearsal in the auditorium of the church. The rehearsals are at 8 o'clock.

New members are always welcome and those desiring an audition for membership are asked to meet with the director, Mr. Walter Flandorf, on Friday evenings at 7:30.

The choir consists of a friendly group of people who work hard, who love their work, and who are also very faithful in its performance. They also manage to have many enjoyable social evenings together.

BAZAAR–NOV. 18 and 19

The long-worked-for, long-awaited ANNUAL PEOPLES CHURCH BAZAAR will actually take place this month—only two weeks and a half away—earlier than usual this year.

Dr. Bradley will OFFICIALLY OPEN THE BAZAAR on Wednesday evening, November 17th, at 9 o'clock, at the close of the Wednesday night book lecture.

Luncheon will be served at the Bazaar on Thursday, November 18th, at 12 noon—price, 75c.

Dinner will be served both evenings of the Bazaar, Thursday, November 18th and Friday, November 19th, at 5:30 o'clock,—$1.50.

The dinners are always excellent, home-cooked and delicious. Dinner-time on these evenings is a friendly get-together opportunity for the members and friends of the church, who come from far and near to enjoy a social and interesting evening. The Bazaar is a family affair, and after an early dinner, everyone visits the booths, does some Christmas shopping in a neighborhood atmosphere, and no one leaves for home until the lights go out.

This year materials have been more accessible and never have there been more beautiful articles to display than those which have been received thus far and which the ladies who have been working all summer have made.

Let us all meet at the dinner table at the Bazaar and then spend an evening of fun together.

But first, have you made your donation?

THE WOMAN'S CLUB

The Woman's Club of The Peoples Church has, from the beginning, sponsored the Annual Peoples Church Bazaar. On the president, Mrs. Walter A. Stehle, of the club this year falls the responsibility of General Manager of the entire Bazaar, including the dinners, the luncheon, the booths, and all of the intricate and multitudinous details of a truly big bazaar. Each booth at the Bazaar has an individual chairman and these are as follows:

The Professional and Business Woman's Club Booth, which is a miscellaneous booth (a sort of miniature bazaar all by itself) is in the capable hands of Miss Dorothea Thompson, President of the Business Woman's Club.

Apron Booth—Miss Ethel Fowler.
Bazaar Display Platform—Mrs. O. N. Naylor.
Chance Books—Mrs. H. B. Hunter.
Choir Booth—Mr. Howard Wentz II.
Church School of Religious Education Booth—Mrs. Margaret Chirpe.
Fancy Goods—Mrs. G. A. Schweizer.
Food and Candy—Mrs. C. W. Flaig.
Handkerchiefs and Towels—Mrs. W. B. Heath.
Kitchen Booth—Mrs. J. Patterson.
Men's Booth—Mr. L. E. McCloy.
Pillow Cases—Mrs. J. Raven.
Radio—Mrs. Thomas A. Harrison.
Refreshments—June Young.
White Elephant—Mrs. A. M. Cameron.
Uptown Players—J. Bradley-Griffin.

Each chairman has a very capable committee and the above list of workers alone would guarantee a successful bazaar to anyone who knew the individuals personally.

With all the work of the Bazaar in progress, other affairs of the club have gone ahead in a business-as-usual manner, with the opening luncheon, the two October meetings and the

annual Homecoming Party carried to a successful conclusion.

ANNUAL DONATION TEA

The November events of interest are, first of all, the Annual Donation Tea, with Mrs. Preston Bradley as Chairman and Hostess, assisted by officers of the Woman's Club. The tea will take place on Monday afternoon, November 15th, at one o'clock. Admission to this tea is by a gift or donation to the Bazaar.

This is always an outstanding event, with an unusually beautiful program which Mrs. Bradley plans with great thought and care. Mrs. E. Wilbur will be the social chairman of the afternoon.

RECIPROCITY DAY

On Monday, November 22nd, at one o'clock, the Literature and Drama Department, of which Mrs. Earl E. Clark is Chairman, will present Dr. Preston Bradley.

The social hour hostesses will be Mrs. W. E. Hughes and Mrs. P. H. Raabe.

While it is not customary to list December events in the November issue, Mrs. Stehle announces there will be a Rummage Sale by the club early in December, and all who read these lines are asked to keep it in mind and be planning and saving contributions of clothing and anything suitable to the sale.

MEN'S CLUB

The Men's Club of The Peoples Church of Chicago is one of its outstanding organizations. Its membership, numbering several hundred, is composed of business and professional men not only of the north and northwest area, but from all parts of Chicago. As is true of all the other groups of the church, it is not necessary to be a church member in order to join the club. The dues are nominal and one may attend without becoming a member by the payment of a very small guest fee at each meeting.

The Men's Club programs are constant reminders that this club is on its toes to keep abreast of the times. Last season, under the splendid leadership of Mr. L. E. McCloy, some of the programs included the presentation of Governor Dwight H. Green, Prof. Geo. W. Haney, demonstrating the Lie-Detector, with the Mayor, Hon. Martin J. Kennelly as Guest of Honor; a Firemen's Night, with Capt. Joseph F. Barrett as speaker; an evening with Judge John A. Sbarbaro, author of "Marriage Is On Trial;" a Sport's Night, with pictures of the World's Series and Don Heap as commentator; Col. Robert A. Hirshfield, who was with Gen. Stillwell in India and Burma, and Dr. Preston Bradley.

In addition to important and noted speakers there is always music and a variety of excellent entertainers. Refreshments are never omitted.

This season Mr. L. H. Hangel promises to keep up the recognized standard already set by his predecessors. There are ladies nights every now and then and these evenings are always a social success and well patronized.

Because of the popularity and importance of the speakers appearing on their programs, it is not always possible to give our readers advance notice of the names of these speakers and artists. However, a phone call to Harold Hansen, Secretary, Edg. 4-5998 or to Mr. L. H. Hangel, Rav. 8-0462 will always secure for you the information.

Meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month, in Anderson Hall of the Peoples Church. Why not pay the Men's Club a visit?

THANKSGIVING

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25th

At 11 o'clock, there will be a one-hour Community Thanksgiving Service in The Peoples Church.

The Rev. Benjamin W. Will, Pastor of the Granville Avenue Methodist Church, will assist in the service.

This service will be non-denominational and non-sectarian and members of the Granville Avenue Church and of the Lions Club, the Kiwanis Club and other civic organizations have been invited to attend.

Dr. Bradley will preach the Thanksgiving Sermon.

PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS WOMAN'S CLUB

Time has a way of marching on! Or is it, as one professor was heard to remark, we who march and time that stays? However that may be, The Professional and Business Woman's Club of The Peoples Church of Chicago, has just entered its tenth year of existence and progress.

Nine happy years they have been, with an outstanding group of loyal, friendly, sincere business and professional women meeting together twice monthly in Anderson Hall of The Peoples Church. Sometime during this 1948-49 season—probably at the closing annual dinner, there will be a great 10th Anniversary Celebration of the birth of this club, a club which means so much to its members and to the Peoples Church.

Again mention is made that in this group as in every other organization of the church it is not necessary for one to belong to The Peoples Church (or for that matter to any church) in order to become a member of the club, nor is it necessary to become a member in order to attend.

The officers of the club are members of the church, but any woman who is unable to attend a daytime woman's club, or who may find it possible to attend both daytime and evening groups is welcome to the meetings, whether a regular member or not. The club aims to serve the needs of the church and the community and to be an avenue of friendliness and help.

The programs offered are varied, of especial interest to women, and frequently the meeting is thrown open to both men and women.

One of the club's special philanthropies is Lakewood House, one of the Mary Bartelme Club homes. The members of the P. and B. W. Club have helped with the furnishing of the rooms of this home and give special parties for the girls, as well as helping with the whole Bartelme Club project.

Liberalist readers are urged to interest their friends in attending the meetings of the business woman's club of the church to find out if it may meet a need in their lives.

The club during its nine years of existence has had four presidents, the

last incumbent having been Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, who led the club in a splendid record of achievement for the past three years. The present president is Miss Grace Rozanski, of 1434 Thome Avenue.

THE UPTOWN PLAYERS

J. BRADLEY-GRIFFIN, *Director*
1149 N. LaSalle Street
Michigan 2-3105

The Uptown Players opened their fall and winter season at the Eleventh Street Theatre, 62 E. 11th St., with "I Remember Mama." Those who missed their presentation of this delightful play with Lillian Smith in the title role and the Director, J. Bradley-Griffin as Uncle Chris, missed a very excellent performance of a beautiful play.

For their NOVEMBER PRODUCTION The Players are doing the ever popular "LIFE WITH FATHER." John Salling will play the part of Father and Glenna Tate will do the role of Mother.

During this entire season the plays will be given on the second Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday nights at 8:30 and on Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. There will be only these four performances each month. The price of the tickets is $1.25 (including tax) and on Saturdays $1.50. Patron books are still at $10.

* * *

NOVEMBER DRAMA TEA, Sunday, November 7th, at 4 o'clock, in Anderson Hall of the Peoples Church, 941 Lawrence Avenue, near Sheridan Road. Two one-act plays will be given, "THE HALF HOUR" by J. M. Barrie, directed by Walter Gruenwald; and Barrie's "TWELVE POUND LOOK," directed by Jane Lillie. Tickets are 60c including tax.

THE USHERS CLUB

Surely no group in the church is more faithful or deserving of greater praise and appreciation than the loyal staff of ushers.

Present at every church service, they have an outstanding record for faithful and constant attendance.

Not only do they give courteous and faithful service as ushers, but as an active group of the church they annually present an outstanding event, financial returns of which go to benefit the church. The ushers welcome to their ranks any who truly wish to be of service.

FOR THE YOUNGSTERS

GIRL SCOUT TROOP NO. 187, Betty Boaz, Leader, meets every Thursday evening, in Anderson Hall of the church, at 7:30 p.m.

The Scouts do excellent work and give of their services gladly whenever and wherever possible.

They have acquired a waiting list and the aim is to form a new troop as often as it is possible to make the proper and necessary arrangements.

THE STILL YOUNGER

BROWNIE SCOUT TROOP NO. 630 meets every Monday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock in Bradley Hall of the church.

Vera Swanson is the leader; her 'phone number LAk. 5-8708.

TRIBUTE TO MR. C. K. ANDERSON

offered by Dr. Bradley during the responsive reading of the Church Litany, at the Sunday Service, October 24, 1948, in The Peoples Church

The Peoples Church of Chicago has had a great loss, and the heart of the Pastor has had a great sorrow in the leaving of this life of our dear friend and co-worker, Mr. C. K. Anderson. Mr. Anderson died on Tuesday morning in a Pullman car going into Charleston, West Virginia. He was borne from this Church Friday afternoon. I could not let this first church service without him, pass without our expressing in our silence our gratitude and appreciation for him. He was my friend for more than 35 years. He was Chairman of the Building Committee that built this Church; he was President of our Board of Trustees; he was a member of our Board of Trustees at his death. Where I stand now, Mr. Anderson and I stood, as I took up the first shovelful of dirt in this lot, and he the second, when we started to build this building. Two weeks ago today he sat with us in his seat. After the service I greeted and talked to him for the last time. He was a great good man and he loved this Church. He came to this country from Sweden when he was a youngster with nothing, but he gave this country much.

I miss him this morning; I shall always miss him. He loved this Church, and every day during the more than a year that it was under construction, he always stopped here on his way to the loop to see how the work was going. He stood with me in this pulpit on our day of dedication.

You will remember two weeks ago I referred to him. How pleased he was. As we took his body lovingly and tenderly to Rose Hill Friday afternoon of this week, I felt that something had gone out of my life, and gone out of the life of the Church. He would not have it so, he would say to the Church, he would say to me, he would say to all of his friends who were here Friday afternoon to pay him honor, he would say to us all, "Go on, go on with life; go on with the work of the Church; do your best." That is what he would say to us, and on this first Sunday without him in all these years, we offer our tribute, our appreciation, our love which cannot be broken by death. Our dead are never dead as long as they are remembered.

HE LIVED A LIFE

"What was his creed?
I do not know his creed, I only know
That here below, he walked the common road
And lifted many a load, lightened the task.
Brightened the day for others toiling on a weary way;
This, his only meed; I do not know his creed.

"What was his creed? I never heard him speak
Of visions rapturous, of Alpine peak,
Of doctrine, dogma, new or old;
But this I know, he was forever bold
To stand alone, to face the challenge of each day,
And live the truth, so far as he could see—
The truth that evermore makes free.

"His creed? I care not what his creed;
Enough that never yielded he to greed,
But served a brother in his daily need;
Plucked many a thorn and planted many a flower;
Glorified the service of each hour;
Had faith in God, himself, and fellowmen;
Perchance he never thought in terms of creed,
I only know he lived a life, indeed!"

—*Author Unknown.*

The Liberalist

FREEDOM—FELLOWSHIP—CHARACTER

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EDITORIAL

IF HUMANITY ever reaches the point where it says "There is nothing can be done," every effort for understanding will fail. There is so much fuzzy thinking, so much prejudice, so much misinformation, so much confusion in the minds of so many, that any ray of light or beam of hope is welcomed by us all. There *is* such light, and there is such hope! I do not accept the principle of the inevitable. If man has no control over his destiny, and is the victim of forces beyond his reach, then we are all victims of a cruel hoax. It would be better had we not been born. What ought to be the task of the ordinary, common citizen in all this, the one who has not lost faith and wishes above everything else that through his efforts he might help pull the world out of this colossal muddle and confusion? Whatever happens, you in your little corner of the world, and I in mine, will be here to meet it, to face it. This is no time for hysteria. It is a time for careful thinking. It is a time for us to study and weigh and read and analyze as best we can. It is a time when we should be careful of our sources of information. It is a time when we should not blanket hatred of a race, or a creed or a religion by the stupendous stupidity of what one person or a group within that framework does. I am as convinced as I am of the reality of this microphone, that there is brooding in the world at this moment a new spirit. I believe with all my heart and mind that there is coming to the nations of this world a new leadership. I believe that out of Japan and Germany and Britain and France, and Czechoslovakia and Russia and the United States, there will be heard voices, and there will arise personalities whose names we do not know at this hour, but they will come upon the horizon and over the rim of the world. Why do I say this? For the simple reason, and sometimes I think its simplicity is its barrier, that the fundamental structure of this universe is good; that evil cannot endure, cannot last; that evil nations, evil principles, evil institutions and people who are grounded in self-interest will gradually but surely be eliminated. Nor do I think this can be accomplished by war. We have tried long enough to make the world good by force. You

can kill bodies with bullets, but you cannot kill ideals with bullets, nor can you destroy the soul. If I did not have this fundamental faith in this basic integrity of the universe of which you and I are a part, I, too, would probably surrender to the philosophy of materialism and mechanism as the hope of man. It is not man's hope. Two ideals face each other: the ideal based upon the unimportance of the human personality, and the ideal based upon the dignity and greatness of man. In the long conflict, dignity and freedom triumph.

J. William Hudson, beloved teacher and philosopher, was one time climbing a western mountain. He was accompanied by an old mountaineer guide. They struggled around a particularly dangerous curve overlooking a chasm. As they did so, a huge boulder loosened from the mountainside and went crashing down into the chasm, breaking off as it went, other rocks, shrubs and trees. They stood silently watching this spectacle, their ears filled with the thunderous tones as the boulder came to rest at the bottom. After a moment's pause, the old mountaineer looked at Dr. Hudson and he said, "Well, this world is still being made, hain't it?"

In the words of this old mountaineer, "This world is still being made, hain't it?" We find stated with simplicity, and with the truth which is always simple, a fact which we all should understand. Yes, this world is still being made. This is an hour of decision. Creation has not ceased. Upon the long tortuous highway of the centuries the feet of man have been bruised and calloused, his heart broken, his body mangled, his mind befuddled, but he has stumblingly and falteringly gone on his way, under the urge of something beautiful and something good. He will stumble and falter some more. He will weep and bleed and die, but he has seen the golden tints of a dawn and the beauty of what he might be will lure him on and on. Because I believe this, I am lifted by the courageous words of the poet Browning, to "greet the unseen with a cheer," and I agree with these lines from Stanton Coit's "The Spirit of Man" which are included in that lovely anthology of Thomas Curtis Clark's "Poems of Justice":

The Spirit of Man shall triumph and reign
o'er all the earth.
The earth was made for Man, he is heir to
all that therein is.
He is the end of creation, the purpose of the
ages since the dawn of time.
He is the fulfillment of all prophecy and is
himself the goal of every great hope born
in high desire.
Who art thou, O Spirit of Man?

. . . . . .

Though thou returnest to the level of the
beast Thou shalt arise to the heights of
Thy Divine Humanity.
For the Spirit of Man breathes the untiring
purpose of the Living God and to the
fulfillment of that purpose the whole
creation moves.

Every action of our lives touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity.

Chapin

"THE CRYING NEED OF A RENEWED CHRISTIANITY"

(Excerpts from an address by Dr. Charles W. Eliot, President Emeritus, Harvard University, delivered under the auspices of the Unitarian Churches of Philadelphia and published in The Liberalist of August, 1926. This is the second and concluding part of the address which was begun in the October issue.)

IS this ineffective condition the final issue of the teachings of Jesus Christ, or is it only the result of the structure of the institutions, and the quality of the doctrines in which those teachings have been embodied and set forth? To this question a great many men in all the nations of Europe and America reply that such a discussion has no interest for them; that they have not only rejected the traditional dogmas of established Christianity, but that they have no interest in discussing them; that the vital movements of the human spirit have taken more promising directions; and that they are concerned not with the Christian churches, but with the new powers that make for liberty, enlightenment and progress. Multitudes of these men say that they are ready for any sort of social service; and at this moment multitudes of them in France and England are showing by their voluntary acts that they are ready to suffer and die in the cause of freedom; while other multitudes equal in number, permit themselves to be driven to wounds and death in the cause of effective discipline, force and domination. On both sides, millions of men are exhibiting extraordinary self-sacrifice and devotion, natural fruits of the spirit of Jesus Christ; but most of these heroes have not consciously derived these lofty sentiments from the Christian churches, but are moved by the common loves of family, home and country.

For two generations the men that have been doing and are now doing the work of the world have, in large measure, withdrawn from the organized churches, or maintain but a nominal connection with them,—a connection however, which often includes considerable payments to the churches on behalf of their wives and children. With trifling exceptions, the church is no longer the center of social recognition, or of social enjoyments for the multitude. . . .

The fundamental trouble is that the Christian churches, as instituted and organized, have relied for centuries on imposed beliefs, rites, sacraments, symbols, and observances. Since the latter years of the eighteenth century, it has become more and more difficult to impose beliefs on educated people; and intelligent men have steadfastly lost faith in mysticism, symbolism, and sacerdotalism, and have come to rely more and more on the careful ascertainment of facts, the human reason, and the natural sentiments of reverence and love. They have also come to prefer for themselves and their families liberty, independence, and public order founded on agreed-upon law, to obedience, submission and order founded on discipline administered to the many by the few. With these new tendencies of the human spirit the great Christian churches are not in full accord.

The great Christian churches have always supported the claim of absolute monarchs that they rule by Divine right; but in the modern world only ignorant or archaic persons accept that doctrine. . . . The thinking person who

is enduring a life of suffering now, on this earth, is much less disposed than he used to be to accept as a real consolation another imagined life free from the struggles and pains of the present life. In other words, the consolations and hopes which the Christian churches have heretofore imparted to suffering human beings are today far less efficacious than they were in the first eighteen centuries. Neither the heaven nor the hell of the Christian churches appeals to the modern man as it formerly did to his predecessors.

The condition of Europe at this moment is the last and most convincing demonstration that the great churches of Christendom have lost their power to keep Man from sin, to guide him on an upward path, and to make him happy; for the churches are helpless in the presence of this terrible mass of long-planned, elaborately contrived human sin, shame, and suffering, although the mass is shot through by splendid gleams of courage, self-sacrifice and patriotic devotion. The religious state of Christendom today is therefore in need of a genuine revival. Mankind needs to worship, needs incitements to love, reverence and duty, and a happy spiritual conception of the universe. Without these helps man cannot possibly be happy in his family, his labor or his social order. Without these conceptions of the finite and the infinite values, Man cannot rise in his nature or his life from bad to good, and from good to better. No single personality born in Christendom—and no class of persons—can reach his best without accepting as his guides in life the fundamental teachings of Jesus Christ—love God and the neighbor, have compassion on the wronged and the desolate, seek the truth that frees, and worship God in spirit and in truth. To live in this way, it is not necessary to accept any of the dogmas of the great churches, or any part of their symbolism or ritualism. Indeed, much of their symbolism, ritualism, dogmatism and ecclesiasticism is inconsistent with essential obedience to the precepts of Jesus Christ.

What then is the renewed Christianity which these terrible times we are living in cry out for in the midst of tears and heart-breaking sorrows? It is a Christianity which abandons the errors and the unjust, cruel conceptions which the centuries have piled up on the simple teachings of Jesus. It is a Christianity which sympathizes with and supports the aspirations of mankind for freedom,—freedom in thought, speech and action,—and completely abandons authoritative ecclesiasticism and governmental despotism. It is a Christianity which hallows and consecrates birth, marriage, the bringing up of children, family life, the earning of the livelihood, and death, and rejects all the aspersions on the natural life of Man which Christianity inherited from paganism and Judaism. It is a Christianity which will be the friend and ally of all that is good and ennobling in literature, science and art, and will avail itself without fear of all the new means of teaching and helping men which successive generations shall discover, and of all the innocent enjoyments and social pleasures, while resisting effectively every unwholesome or degrading influence on human society. It is a Christianity which will recognize that the pursuit of happiness in this world is legitimate for every human being, and that the main function of government is to protect and further men in that pursuit by securing to the community health, education, wholesome productive labor and liberty.

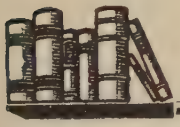
Do you ask if there exist in the world any exemplars of this sort of Christianity? Fortunately for the future of

the world there are to be found in nearly every Christian communion individuals who illustrate in their personal lives the purity and power of the simple religion taught by Jesus Christ. Many of these persons are quite unconscious of the embarrassments which the creeds, rituals, dogmas and discipline of their respective churches would inflict on their candid minds, if they realized, or apprehended in clear and logical statements, the meaning of the traditional doctrines and rites of their churches.

Finding themselves practically free to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God, they remain in the churches into which they were born, held there by family ties, sweet associations, or conservative sentiment, and inattentive to the inconsistencies between their life of the spirit and the historical doctrines of the churches to which they belong. They are all exemplars of the renewed Christianity of which there is such crying need, and many of them are active promoters of that renewal.

The liberal churches of Protestantism are, however, the best exemplars of renewed Christianity; because they have definitely abandoned the official creeds and dogmas of the past, all ecclesiasticism and almost all symbolism and ritualism. Their membership, modest in number and little disposed to proselytism, consists exclusively of persons who propose to be free, simple and candid in their religious thought, and in all expressions of that thought. These independent churches lay the emphasis on character and conduct, and are concerned with the tendencies and practices of their members in daily action, rather than with the benefits of their fellowship.

After all, true Christianity is not a body of doctrines, or an official organization to direct and control men's minds and wills. It is a way of life.



BOOK CHATS

IT has been many, many years since we have had a book publishing season such as we are having this autumn. Hardly can I recall a time when more important books, dealing with the contemporary scene have been available to readers. I did not have any trouble picking out the books for this Book Chat. The first one is entitled "Thy Men Shall Fall," and written by Sidney and Samuel Moss, who are brothers. I realize that there are many people who shy away from books about war in general and any war in particular. During the war and immediately after, we had many books written that attained temporary recognition. Many of them were hastily and poorly written and many of them were written obviously with the idea that war was of preeminent interest and therefore they would be readily salable; but as time went on, the chaff was winnowed out from the wheat. It takes perspective to do that, and it takes the creative quality to interpret accurately the significance of war.

Frankly, this book—"Thy Men Shall Fall"—is a war book, but please don't classify it with any other book you know, for it stands all by itself. The book has only recently been published, but it was sent to me in the early summer by the publishers, Ziff-Davis Publishing Company. Accompanying the book sent to me was a letter from

the Vice-President of Ziff-Davis, a distinguished author himself, Mr. Louis Zara. He said in his first letter to me, written last May, "Remembering that you like to see books well in advance, I am taking the liberty of sending to you under separate cover, a sewn copy of a war novel, which will, I think, rank as one of the finest pieces of fiction to come out of the late war. Perhaps it cannot compete for vulgarity, but certainly for poetry and for a real portrayal of the infantryman's lot in a great war, 'Thy Men Shall Fall,' is without peer. We have deliberately postponed it until the fall, so that we can, in the meantime, arouse the kind of enthusiasm that such a work deserves." I put the book aside until I left Chicago, when I would have more opportunity to read it carefully. I finished it in early July and immediately wrote Mr. Zara. I had not heard and did not know of Sidney and Samuel Moss, which of course is not to their discredit by any means, so I asked Mr. Zara about these two young Chicagoans who wrote this unusual and remarkable book. Sidney was the soldier who actually saw many of the experiences which, through the poetic transmutation come upon these pages. He began his writings in the ruins of Berlin, and nightly read aloud to his buddies what he had written during the day. Exactly how he and his older brother, Samuel, collaborated, Mr. Zara is not sure, but he suspects that Samuel is the poet of the two, for he did not have an actual war experience and yet was somehow able through his imaginative powers to knead this raw account into this vibrant prose. Although both men have written before, this will be their first published novel.

Here is a book that shows this ghastly institution and the experiences of the men who fought, from North Africa to Sicily, to England, to Omaha Beach and finally into Germany itself. Here is no pomp and ceremony of war, no glamour, no romance—but power. If I could, and had the money, I would put a copy of this book on the desk of every member of Congress and on every desk in the United Nations Assembly in Paris. I wish every diplomat, every Prime Minister, every dictator in the world would read it. I wish Americans would read it, all kinds of Americans, young and old, rich and poor—the story of these young men, their experiences, their reactions from those experiences. While there is no plot as we think of plots in novels, there is a definite architectural design, and there is the necessary unity without which there can be no great work of art. Each of the men involved in the shared experiences of the tragedy stands out with etching-preciseness. Each is a character. There are moments of great tragedy, when one of the boys receives word from the woman of his heart and life that she has become enamored with a Captain back home in America, and the fervid quality of her early letters cools into the formalities of a rapidly d i s a p p e a r i n g love. Interestingly enough, and this can be said about few books, if you drop into a bookstore and read the last chapter, the thirty-third, you will read all the book. You will never be satisfied until you read it all. The decisions that these men make, the tragedies they face, are not the tragedies of the warmongers or the war planners or the war designers, but of the men who must fight in the wars, who do the actual dirty work. In no other book about war, of which I know, has there been captured the real experiences of the men who fought, as in this book. Listen to these closing sentences which vibrate with the spirit of the book: "Now that the death devices in the world had been launched, fired, rocketed; now that we had en-

dured every privation and misery known to man; now that the young men of the earth were slaughtered in the sudden violences; now that civilization lay in ruins and people were homeless and adrift; now that the living went cold, hungry, miserable,—or simply wept—in the inconsolable places of the world, I wondered at the insanity of men that they make wars. And I wondered how soon the next one would come. And thinking thus, I stood in silence, watching the colorless landscape flicking by, peaceful and desolate and ruined."

* * *

Because of the acute and critical situation in world affairs I have chosen to bring to your attention a book entitled "Gandhi and Stalin," "Two Signs at the World's Crossroads" and written by Louis Fischer. For the last 26 years Louis Fischer has covered the world. As correspondent for the best magazines and newspapers in America and other countries, he has lived for fourteen years in Russia and spent long periods in most of the countries of Europe as well as India, Palestine and Egypt. His many articles and books have earned him a large reading public.

Louis Fischer has selected Gandhi and Stalin as the two personalities who represent in the ultimate analysis the final conflict of ideas which the world faces today. His justification for selecting these two personalities is well established in the book. It is not a large book. Harper & Co. are the publishers and there are only 178 pages of reading matter. But having been a student of both of these characters for many years, from my personal point of view I believe Louis Fischer has made out a substantial case for selecting them for the examples of these antithetical principles. I never saw or heard Gandhi, but I have read everything I could about him, all he has written, and have many close friends who knew him well; among them Dr. John Haynes Holmes and Dr. E. Stanley Jones.

I might say right here that this is a good time for me to bring to your attention a new interpretation of Gandhi which Dr. E. Stanley Jones has just written, and which the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press published in September.

"The crisis of our era," says Louis Fischer, "is essentially moral." That observation is not new. If a terrifying third world war is to be prevented and Mr. Fischer is convinced it can be prevented, the urgent need is for an alliance between politics and principles; and who is there who dare deny that such an alliance is necessary? In this new book the famous author of "Men and Politics" and the other book which perhaps some of you will recall called "The Great Challenge," leads us through the confusion of the world to a new definition of moral values, and a new understanding of how true democracy can achieve lasting peace, no matter how that democracy is challenged by the dictators of whatever stripe or color. After 25 years of experience travelling about the world, observing men and nations, he finally narrows the conflict down to a struggle not only between democracy and communism, or democracy and fascism, or democracy and nazism, but he groups, and quite rightly I think, communism and fascism and every other form of totalitarian philosophy into one pattern and calls it simply, dictatorship, which it is.

Now, as the symbol of the democratic faith in the supreme importance of the individual, which is the very essence of democracy, Fischer chooses Mahatma Gandhi. Louis Fischer has lived with the great leader, Gandhi, knew him intimately, and had excep-

tional opportunity of becoming familiar with the basic belief which Gandhi had in the principle of freedom and the integrity of the human personality, These principles, says Louis Fischer, are the fundamentals of democracy. Then he takes them and makes the contrast with those of dictatorship and uses, and again I think quite rightly, Stalin as the personification of the antithetical philosophy. Here again Louis Fischer is on familiar ground, for he spent many years in the Soviet Union and lived there as well. This authoritative background enables him to develop his thesis logically.

To any one who might have any confusion about this whole matter, this book will be a clarifying and illuminating influence. Surely the clearer picture we can all have of the real issue, the more plainly we can see the way which we must all take. We are also able to see the pitfalls and the dangers ahead, and above all we also will understand the necessity of correcting the defects which grow up in the abuses of a free society. This stimulating book, "Gandhi and Stalin," indicates that Gandhi was very close to a realization of solving this dilemma. Here is a book which is written for Americans who seek a brief, clear guide through today's political confusion, and a helpful statement of the moral issues which underly our struggles. Louis Fischer says "Defeating Stalin with Gandhi is the way to personal freedom and personal decency, and therefore to democracy, and therefore to peace. Turn the searchlight inward."

The *RADIO* MAIL BAG

By GRACE THAYER BRADLEY

NOW that we have come to the month of Thanksgiving let us pause to consider our blessings:—the things for which, when we thoughtfully realize them, we feel deeply thankful: If we have good health, or mediumly so, and we have our eyesight and hearing—if we have work to do, and the capability to do it; if we have a friend (or many) to whom we can turn for counsel or sympathy in trouble, for understanding and gladness in our joys, for pleasure and companionship in our leisure. Everyone has more real blessings to be grateful for than they may imagine at first glance.

Many of you may remember a few years ago how Dr. Bradley passed on the idea to his Church members and radio listeners, that it would be a very nice thing to write letters during the month of November to any person or persons who have been an influence for good in our individual life, telling them (perhaps for the first time) how much we appreciate what they have meant to us, etc., etc. A couple of years ago one of Dr. Bradley's listeners wrote him that he had followed his suggestion to write a "Thank-you letter." He had long realized the lasting influence a certain teacher of his high school days had been all down the years. She came frequently into his mind, as he recalled

her wise counselling, her fine but firm character, her patience and understanding. It was all of thirty-five years since his graduation from the old school in his home town and he and his folks had moved to another city. As he grew into manhood and the business world, later a home and children of his own, he never forgot this teacher and how much she had helped him, but he never had written her. So he sat down at his desk and wrote her a long letter, telling her about himself and his little family, but mostly of how often he thought of her, of her kind and wise teachings. He begged her forgiveness for waiting so long before thanking her for the influence she had been in his life. And he said if there was ever anything he could do for her to please call upon him. He trusted to chance that she still lived in the town he had left as a boy, as it was the town of her birth, he knew. He wrote in his letter to Dr. Bradley that he received an immediate answer from his elderly teacher, telling him how overjoyed she was to hear from him, saying that he was the only one of "her boys" out of the hundreds she had taught who had ever said "thank you" or expressed gratitude for her efforts to help them make a foundation upon which to build their lives. She was in a hospital awaiting a major operation. In closing, she said if she did not come through it, for him to know his letter and all he had expressed in it had made her last days very happy. He phoned the hospital and learned she had not "come through"—had succumbed a few hours after the operation, which was of malignant nature. He said in his letter to Dr. Bradley that he never had felt such a sense of thankfulness in his heart, as in knowing his gratitude had not been too late—that it had made her happy, though naturally he regretted not having written years earlier.

This is just one case. We heard from many who had very happy outcomes from their "Thanksgiving letters." Why don't you try it? It may be to a friend whose splendid character you admire; perhaps their fine fortitude through trouble, or the good work they are unselfishly doing, all being an inspiration to you, and you are glad for knowing them—grateful to call them friend. A letter to a relative with whom there has been coolness or misunderstanding may bring you together again to forget and forgive!—Write some "Thanksgiving letters!"

* * *

When I take out a number of letters from the Mail Bag, it is often interesting to note the diversity of the paths in life from which they come. Listening to the same sermon or broadcast, each takes it to himself and receives sustenance for his individual need. It is often amazing. Here is a man who is a doctor of philosophy, coming a foreigner to our shores, becoming a citizen of the U. S. A.—well, read his interesting and grateful letter:

"Dear Dr. Bradley:—I have listened to your services last Sunday morning. This broadcast was not the first one of yours that I tuned in; as a matter of fact I am one of your many unknown listeners who enjoyed your services and your sermon for more than four years without any response. I simply took it for granted that whenever I listen to your services you will come to the pulpit to move the dormant souls of those who still cannot see the differences between right and wrong. I am really ashamed that during these years I accepted your overflowing enthusiasm about the possibilities of improving our society in which we live—without coming to your services or without saying a thank you. Probably it is still not too late.

"I am an immigrant who came here

in 1939. I used the word 'immigrant' instead of refugee because I did not come here to take refuge from any tyrant, but I came here to become the citizen of a free country independently of any political events that happened to take shape at the time of my immigration. I was 26 years old when I arrived, filled with strong nationalistic ideas that were transplanted in me through rigid education; however, my educators over there could not do one thing to destroy my proper judgment toward the truth. I came here and I was not disappointed for a moment.

"Strict rules governed my religious education too over there. When I moved to Chicago in 1942 and heard your first broadcast, I was simply amazed about the world that you opened up before me. The human principles you preach are so evident that I have no doubt in my mind that if more people could hear it, we would live in a different world. Unfortunately, dogmas, prejudices and meaningless traditions prevent people to come out to the open and free their rusted minds.

"I want you to know that I greatly appreciate the work you have done and ask you not to be disturbed if the members of your congregation will not come to the services in great numbers on rainy days. You admired the members of the Catholic church who crowded the churches last Sunday in spite of the unfavorable weather. I think that as long as your voice can reach your members who will listen to you and get inspiration from you, you don't have to worry. Fear from punishment because of absence from church, or blind obedience to centuries-old rules or the consideration of a nasty remark from the neighbor's porch will result of course in a larger crowd, but will not make the people better. At least your audience will not leave your church or broadcast with ambiguous words and mystic feelings, but with rich human experiences. I will be at your services next Sunday. Respectfully yours," "P. S. Please do not mention my name if you use this letter."

* * *

This letter is sweet from a mother who tells how her little family of three children react to Doctor's broadcast every evening:

"Dear Dr. Bradley: I am a member of a group here in Bellaire that we call 'The Book Worms.' Being the least bookie of the whole group, I have become, automatically, the poet and philosopher. Thus I can use my own work or repeat things I hear on the radio for my report each month.

"Your message on WGN tonight said almost exactly what I would like to say at our next meeting. If it is available I would be very pleased if I could use it. I am so clumsy with words that it would take me an hour to get the thought across that you so ably expressed in less than 15 minutes.

"We enjoy your programs every evening while eating supper. Our children can't grasp all your points, but it doesn't go over their heads entirely. Skipper, who is almost eleven, and very serious minded, just goes for your serious tone—it impresses him even when he doesn't quite grasp the thought and has to ask me for an explanation. Patsy, 6, who sits closest to the radio, tries to look wise and is quick to agree with you when she does understand. All in all—we enjoy your talks. Thank you, Mrs. John Baros."

* * *

This next letter carries suppressed notes of sadness between the lines which I sense, awakening within me resentment and disgust at the actions and greed of Chicago landlords who are a disgrace to our city. But this splendid grandmother's fine character shines out over and above their diffi-

culties. It will not get her down! No, indeed! She is planning to help "Dad" make the farm comfortable for Winter! I sincerely hope it may prove just as interesting and acceptable a place to live in Winter as it has been in summer vacation days. "Reverend and dear Sir: At my very busiest time of day your broadcast comes on, but I have not missed it for a great many years. I have taken care of two little granddaughters since they were babies. They are ten and twelve now, but at six o'clock I never fail to hear 'Grannie, Dr. Bradley is on,' and some years ago there was some discussion about what to give me for Christmas, and one of the babes said: 'I know Grannie would like one of Dr. Bradley's books better than anything; so I received 'Meditations' and it has been a great comfort to me.

"As long as I am writing this letter I must tell you about my dear brother. He was a retired railroad engineer, but the last years of his life he never missed walking down to hear your noonday services. I well remember his last Holy Thursday, he came home and repeated many of your phrases. He said, 'Now that is religion; and I shook Dr. Bradley's hand.'

"We are being evicted from this apartment after being here ten years. I am packing up my books and treasures and giving away what I can. Very fortunately we bought a deserted farm in Wisconsin some years ago, where we have been taking our grandchildren every summer. Now I think Dad and I will have to get it ready this summer so we can live there in winter. We have been taking only children's books, but I will take my books this year. May God bless and keep you and yours. I am most gratefully, Mary Rogers."

* * *

We close the Mail Bag wishing you a truly thankful Thanksgiving!

We will be grateful if you write us—don't forget! And KEEP-ON-THE-BEAM!

THANKSGIVING

GENE H. OSBORNE

What art Thou saying, Lord, to me
By the red-fruited tree—
The yellow pumpkin on its frosted vine—
The purple grapes down by the old stone wall—
That tangle of late asters—silken corn-stalks tall—
Beauty of naked branches and a saffron sky,
That squadron of wild geese that southward fly?
Even the humble carrot hath an orange coat,
The beet a crimson robe—an onion silver skin.
By the rich walnut tree
I see the grey squirrel scampering, filling winter-bin.
The dainty weed beside the road doth yield
A perfect seed, wrought with divinest care;
Sometimes the wonder seems too great to bear.
Oh, Lord, Thy beauteous bounty doth ensnare my soul!
I bow with great thanksgiving!

(From "Poems for Special Days and Occasions," by Thomas Curtis Clark)

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